

POETRY

Unspoken

Anitha Devi Pillai

It's the innocent touch
the downward slide of the eyes
a careless word you drop in her lap
that leaves her baffled.
Was it my blouse?
The neckline should have been higher.

Your blatant jokes
thrown at random, sometimes,
other times in her ears, on the phones
that makes her wonder.
Was that me he was referring to?
I should have turned away.

Winky-kissy face texts
nestled with frisky comments
that tests her response.
She tells him to stop, and he says,
“How dare you imply that?
You have a dirty mind. Not I”.
But say it again, my friend.
Softly if you must.
Loudly if you can.
Boldly if you wish.
And have faith – for not all men are monsters.
The strongest amongst them – stand with us.

Last Kiss

Anitha Devi Pillai

I can't remember our last kiss.

I remember our first kiss.

That's etched in my memory –
the gaze, whispering kisses –
before it all began...

I remember every sigh and feathered touch,
what you wore and said that night,
even the people at the next table.

But I can't remember our last kiss,
the last time I buried my head in your chest
or when our hands locked us together.

No one tells you it's your last.
My gut didn't scream. We didn't fight.
I thought we said
au revoir not goodbye.

I can't remember our last kiss.

Fear

Anitha Devi Pillai

You place fear in my heart
that tears
into the gossamer silk saree
you had placed
in my arms once –
slowly ripping – stretching – tugging,
Until it's just strands of threads
That once was ... us.